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ABSTRACT

Secondary data sources, including the ERIC and National Dropout Prevention Center databases, were reviewed to identify programs and strategies effective in keeping at-risk youth in school and helping them make successful school-to-work transitions. The dropout prevention model that was identified features a system of prevention, mediation, intervention, and recovery activities beginning with preschool youth and leading to adulthood. A review of 20 exemplary vocational programs for special needs students established the following elements as critical to effective transition programs: strong administrative leadership/support; formalized articulation and communication; individualized curriculum modifications and appropriate instructional settings; comprehensive support services (including ongoing career guidance/counseling); and occupational experience. Nine exemplary programs representing diverse geographic regions and institutional settings were identified and profiled. The programs focused on the following groups: economically disadvantaged youth; youth with physical/learning disabilities; females and minority youth; youth with limited English proficiency; underachieving/unmotivated youth; chronically truant youth; substance-abusing youth; juvenile offenders; and tech prep students. (Contains 29 references. Appendixes constituting approximately 50% of this document contain the following: profiles of the 9 exemplary programs; standards/quality indicators for evaluating programs for at-risk students; glossary; and annotated bibliography of 13 organizations and 19 publications addressing the needs of at-risk youth.) (MN)

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MODELS FOR AT RISK YOUTH

FINAL REPORT

August 30, 1996

submitted to

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FOREWORD

There is general agreement on the need for all students to complete their high school education. Business representatives express serious concern about the skill levels and employability of students who do not complete high school. Educators and child advocates foresee a life of missed opportunities for students who drop out of school. Students who leave school early are often described as *at risk* youth.

There is no easy way to describe or characterize individuals who are "at risk". A review of the literature reveals that various labels have been used over time to characterize students who are at risk including: disadvantaged, culturally deprived, underachiever, nonachiever, low ability, slow learner, low socioeconomic status, alienated, dropout prone, disenfranchised, underprivileged, low-performing, language impaired, impoverished, or remedial (Lehr and Harris, 1988). Regardless of the label used to categorize them, many of these individuals are at risk of not succeeding in our educational institutions.

> "If the individual is consistently discouraged by the educational system because he or she receives signals about academic inadequacies and failures, perceives little interest or caring from instructors, and sees the institution's discipline system as both ineffective and unfair, then it is not unreasonable to

expect that he learner will become alienated and uncommitted to completing an education." (Wircenski and Scott, 1995, p 3)

Not only is steady employment difficult for these at risk youth but they often have social, physical, and emotional problems as well. They will face a discouraging future of unemployment, low-paying and menial jobs, sporadic and migrating employment, not to mention the loss of self-esteem, self-respect and the increase of anger and frustration. These youth are of public concern. The consequences show up in increased welfare, unemployment insurance, health and housing costs, higher crime rates, and the loss of tax revenues.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 is designed to provide all young people, including out-of-school and at-risk youth, with access to programs that integrate academic and occupational education, set high standards, and prepare them for the workforce.

PURPOSE OF STUDY AND OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES

Purpose

The information contained in this report was developed as part of a larger effort conducted by the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research and funded by the Ohio Department of Education to examine effective models and strategies to use in serving at-risk populations. This report identifies stages involved with the education of students at risk --- prevention, mediation, intervention, and recovery. The report provides a statistical portrait of the student population who drop out, describes the seriousness of the problem, outlines the reasons for

dropping out, and discusses effective school-to-work strategies appropriate for serving at risk students. It includes a review of the literature dealing with effective strategies for educating students in at-risk situations. Profiles of various model programs which have been identified across a variety of geographical areas and occupations to serve at risk youth are also presented. Common elements of the selected model programs are described and specific recommendations for the state agency and local school-to-work partnerships are given. Definitions relating to dropout rates, dropout prevention, and for some school-to-work programs are provided in a glossary. A bibliography of agencies, organizations, and publications for designing and operating school-to-work systems that serve at risk and out-of school youth is also included.

Method

This study used a literature review of secondary data sources including ERIC and National Dropout Prevention Center databases to identify exemplary program models and strategies which have been found to be effective when dealing with at risk youth. The intent is to provide program planners with information, strategies, and evaluation criteria useful for potential replication and helpful for the effective design of school-to-work opportunities for out-of-school youth.

INTRODUCTION

Most youth jobs serve as an introduction to the workplace. Employers define such jobs to accommodate workers with less than a

high school diploma and to minimize their investment in training. High school graduates are more likely to find jobs than dropouts, but dropouts who are able to find jobs do the same work as graduates. This gap between school and work inhibits the productivity of young workers, squanders society's investment in their education, isolates youth from adults, and undermines high school students' motivation to achieve (Hamilton and Hamilton, 1994, p1). According to the previous authors the prospect of an attractive and attainable career gives young people an incentive to gain academic competence and to behave in a socially responsible manner.

Out-of school youth often need the opportunities that school-to-work provides even more than in-school youth. High school dropouts, as well as young people, who have drifted into poor jobs after high school, generally do not develop the same skills and competencies as in-school youth.

Defining Dropouts: A Statistical Portrait

There are three commonly used types of dropout rates:

- *event dropout rates* measure the proportion of students who drop out in a single year without completing high school;
- *status dropout rates* measure the proportion of the population that has not completed high school and is not enrolled at one point in time, regardless of when they dropped out; and,
- *cohort dropout rates* measure what happens to a single group or cohort of students over time.

During the 1991-92 school year the event rate was 4.4 percent and the status dropout rate totaled 11.0 percent. While the rates appear low, the actual numbers are substantial. The event rate for grades 10-2 at 4.4 percent translates to an estimated 383,000 students who dropped out between October 1991 and October 1992. The status dropout rate represents approximately 3.4 million dropouts in October 1992. Still, the trends in dropout rates over the past decade are encouraging. For example, the status dropout rate declined from 14.1 percent in 1980 to 11.0 percent in 1992. Event, Status, and Cohort Dropout rates are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

Event, Status, and Cohort Dropout Rates

Type of Dropout Rate	Percent
-- Event rate, grades 10-12 (1991-92)	4.4 percent
--- Status rate, ages 16-24 (1991-92)	11.0 percent
--- Cohort rate between 8th and 10th grades, 1988 eighth-graders	6.8 percent
--- Cohort rate between 10th and 12th grades	
1980 sophomores	10.9 percent
1990 sophomores	6.2 percent

Source: NCES. (1993). Dropout Rates in the United States: 1992.

Background Characteristics

Dropout rates are related to a variety of individual and family demographic and socioeconomic reasons. In general, dropout rates are higher for minority students and for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Dropout rates are higher for blacks and Hispanics than for whites. When blacks and whites from similar social backgrounds are compared, however, dropout rates for blacks are not higher, and in some cases may be lower, than for whites. Rates for American Indians and Alaskan Natives are quite high, while those for Asian students are very low (see Table 2). In recent years the dropout rate for males and females have been similar, although in earlier years dropout rates for males tended to be higher those for females.

Dropout rates are higher for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, single-parent families, and non-English family backgrounds (see Table 2). Students whose parents or siblings were dropouts are themselves more likely to drop out. The same is true for those who marry and have children before graduating from high school. The dropout rate is greater in cities than in suburbs and nonmetropolitan areas. Dropping out is most prevalent in the West and South. A student's previous success in and commitment to school are related to the likelihood of dropping out. Those with poor grades, who have repeated a grade, who are overage for their grade, or who are frequently absent are more likely to become dropouts than other students. People are often surprised to discover that most of the

dropouts come from groups who are not usually thought to be at risk. For example, Table 2 shows that of the dropouts for the sophomore class of 1980:

- 66 percent were white;
- 87 percent had an English-language home background;
- 68 percent came from two-parent homes;
- 42 percent attended suburban high schools;
- 80 percent had neither children or spouses;
- 60 percent had C averages or better; and,
- 71 percent had never repeated a grade.

Table 2

Cohort Dropout Rate and the Proportion of Total Dropouts for 1980 Sophomores by Socio-demographic and Geographic Characteristics

Characteristic	Cohort Dropout rate (percent)	Proportion of Total Dropouts 1/
Total	17.3	100.0
SEX		
Male	19.3	55.5
Female	15.2	44.5
RACE/ETHNICITY		
White	14.8	65.7
Black	22.2	17.4
Hispanic	27.9	13.1
Asian	8.2	.6
Am Indian	35.5	3.1

Table 2 (cont.)

Cohort Dropout Rate and the Proportion of Total Dropouts for 1980 Sophomores by Socio-demographic and Geographic Characteristics

HOME LANGUAGE		
Non-English only	20.1	1.9
Non-English Predominant)	20.8	3.5
English (Predominant)	12.7	7.9
English Only	14.5	86.7
SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS 2/		
Highest quartile	6.6	11.6
Second Quartile	10.2	21.0
Third Quartile	14.3	27.9
Lowest Quartile	22.1	39.5
FAMILY STRUCTURE		
Both parents	12.3	68.2
One parent	21.6	26.7
Other	32.6	5.1
REGION		
Northeast	13.7	17.6
Midwest	14.8	24.1
South	19.5	36.8
West	21.7	21.5
METROPOLITAN STATUS		
Urban	24.5	30.7
Suburban	15.1	41.7
Rural	15.6	27.6

1/Proportion of dropouts with nonmissing data
2/ for these variables, 20-27 percent of dropouts have missing data
Source: NCES. (1989). High School and Beyond Survey.

Extent of the Problem

In reviewing the nation's history of education great strides have been made in the universal public school system to provide free elementary and secondary education for all citizens. In 1910 only 16.2 percent of the population over twenty-five years of age completed high school. In 1930, only 23 percent of those over twenty-five had a high school diploma (Venn, 1970, p 84). Although the number of students who drop out and never complete high school is serious, progress is being made. Over the past 20 years, dropout rates have declined. According to a report entitled "Dropout Rates in the United States: 1993, 86 percent of all Americans now complete high school by age 21-22, up from the 1972 rate of 82 percent (NCES, 1994). During 1993, 4.5 percent (381,000) of the 15- to 24 year-olds in grades 10 through 12 dropped out of school, about even with the 1992 rate, but down from the rate of 6.5 percent in the late 1970s. Between 1972 and 1993, the high school completion rate for Hispanics age 21-22 fluctuated, from 55 percent in 1972 to 66.4 percent in 1993. During the same time period the black completion rate increased from 74 percent to 84 percent. The white completion rate rose from 85 percent in 1972 to 90 percent in 1993.

As encouraging as the improving percentages of high school completers are, the students who do not receive diplomas or who are unskilled graduates pose a serious problem. As the number of non-completers has declined, so has the proportion of jobs suitable and

available for unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Technological advances, robotics, computers, and other highly advanced production techniques now demand a more knowledgeable and skilled work force. Undereducated young adults find it difficult to avail themselves of further education, take part in training programs, or secure entry-level jobs without a high school diploma. Most employers require the high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) as a mandatory requirement for most entry-level jobs, career advancements, further training or apprenticeship programs.

Society has a vested interest in increasing the overall high school completion rates and the individual competency levels of today's graduate. Undereducated young adults are both a burden to themselves and a cost to society.

Employment Status for High School Dropouts

Buckingham drew a correlation between dropouts and their inability to find employment (Buckingham, 1984). He emphasized that these young adults are disadvantaged by their poor social adjustment, inability to relate to authority figures, lack of future orientation, and inability to tolerate structured settings. They have poor self-images, fear taking risks, and are deficient in skills needed for survival in a technological society. All of these problems are further exacerbated by the negative status attached to being a dropout.

Dropping out of school does have a direct impact upon an individual's ability to find employment and to earn money over their lifetime. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in October 1995:

- 25% of the men 16- to 24 years-old did not have a high school diploma. Their unemployment rate was 19% compared with 11.9% for men with a high school diploma and 6.5% for men with a high school diploma and some college;
- 24% of the women 16-to 24 year-olds did not have a high school diploma and 28.8% were unemployed. (Vocational Education Weekly, June 1996); and,
- High school graduates, on the average, earn $6,415 more per year than high school dropouts (Bureau of the Census, 1994).

Other researchers have focused on the direct costs to society for undereducated young adults. For example, it is estimated each year's class of dropouts will cost the country over $200 billion during their lifetimes in lost earnings and unrealized tax revenue (Catterall, 1995).

In addition, eighty-two percent of America's prisoners are high school dropouts ("The demographics of school reform", 1990). State and federal governments annually spend billions for housing, medical and related prison costs.

Reasons for Dropping Out

Dropping out of school is a complicated and multifaceted phenomenon. Researchers have found that dropping out is a process, not an event. It is relatively rare for students to make a snap decision

to leave school. Dropout rates decrease as income levels increase. Students from low-income families are 2.4 times more likely to drop out of school than are children from middle income families, and 10.5 times more likely than students from high-income families (NCES, 1993). Twenty-five percent of all poor, urban schools have dropout rates of 50% or higher (Braddock & McPartland, 1993). Both the *event* (annual) dropout rate and the *status* dropout rate are highest among students in low-income families and lowest among students in high-income families.

The most widespread student-reported reasons for dropping out between the 10th and the 12th grade included: did not like school or failing school, job-related reasons, and pregnancy. These reasons commonly offered for leaving school, however, may not be true causes but rationalizations or simplifications of more complex circumstances.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RELATING TO DROPOUT PREVENTION

Dropout Prevention

There is no single solution to the dropout crisis. Just as there are a variety of reasons behind a student's decision to drop out of school, there are a great many strategies used to prevent this from happening.

The National Dropout Center at Clemson University has identified effective strategies for educating students at risk. The Center has developed a dropout prevention model with a system focus

and four distinct stages beginning with pre-school youth and leading to adulthood (Duttweiler, 1995).

The *prevention* stage beginning at preschool through middle school includes those actions which can be taken to anticipate, forestall, or deal with cognitive, social, or personal problems before they irreparably impair a student's ability to perform successfully in school. Prevention strategies include the following: providing quality early childhood education, developing socially responsible behavior, using nongraded primary schools, parenting programs, and linking social services with schools.

The mediation stage also begins in preschool but continues through high school. *Mediation* is the process of providing an educational environment that ensures success for all students. Mediation strategies are the innovative curricular, instructional, and other school experiences provided for students from preschool through graduation. Mediation strategies include addressing multiple learning styles, using authentic assessment, incorporating the use of technology, and preparing for work.

Intervention strategies begin in the elementary years and continue through graduation. *Intervention* strategies are actions designed to interrupt or modify academic, school, or personal problems that are negatively affecting student performance.. Intervention strategies include *mentoring*, peers as resources, and alternative schools.

Recovery strategies typically begin in middle school and continue through adulthood. *Recovery* is the process that provides individuals with a variety of opportunities to complete their education, usually in nontraditional settings. As important as recovery strategies are, this chapter focuses on the use of school-to-work strategies that can prevent dropping out in the first place.

In 1990 the National Dropout Prevention Center conducted an analysis of dropout prevention literature and more than 350 programs. The result is a synthesis of 12 dropout prevention strategies that have had the most positive impact on the dropout rate in communities across the nation. The strategies are: (1) parental assistance and involvement; (2) quality early childhood education; (3) concentrated reading and writing programs; (4) individualized instruction; (5) utilization of instructional technologies; (6) mentoring and tutoring; (7 workforce readiness and counseling; (8) summer enhancement programs; (9) flexible schedules and alternative programs; (10) staff development programs; (11) school-based management; and, (12) community and business collaboration. (Duckenfield et al., 1990).

As a result of its work, the Center recommends that schools adopt a systemic approach to dropout prevention and provides the following conclusions and recommendations:

Recommendation #1: The educational system should be restructured to be more congruent with the needs of those who work in it and the needs of those it serves. Schools must have the authority to make

meaningful decisions through participatory decision-making; adequate resources must be made available; and, professional development must provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to carry out new roles and strategies.

Recommendation #2: The problems faced by children in at risk situations should be the collective responsibility of everyone. Government, businesses, community organizations and agencies, parents, and the schools must join together to provide social support needed to ensure resiliency in children.

Recommendation #3: The technical core of the school---teaching, learning, curriculum, and instruction must engage children in learning. Effective prevention, mediation, and intervention strategies must be adopted to meet the needs of students in at-risk situations.

Barriers to Serving At Risk and Out-of-School Youth

Many school-to-work programs primarily serve in-school youth, while programs that do serve at-risk and out-of school youth have been directed more toward dropout prevention than reintegration with the existing system.

The viewpoint that argues simply for "dropout prevention" fails to recognize that students leave school for many reasons. Pregnancy, family circumstances, economic necessities, substance abuse, lack of academic success, or disciplinary actions can influence a young person's decision to quit school. These youth--faced with the demands of work and life on their own, with minimal academic, occupational, or

social supports--are often not able to achieve their full potential. They need "second chance" programs as well as dropout prevention efforts.

One researcher (Feichtner, 1989) identified programmatic (as opposed to societal) barriers to the effective delivery of services to at-risk youth. The most significant is the lack of a mandated systematic process for delivering the services. Other barriers include:

- lack of coordination between agencies, which often results in competitive and duplicative efforts;
- confusion among partners and youths about what the programs and services are available;
- limited use of parents as resources;
- lack of case managers for secondary students with disadvantages or limited English proficiency;
- lack of career exploration programs in middle schools; and,
- absence of a computerized information management system to control the vast amount of information needed for transition decision-making and program evaluation.

School-to-work programs and services are intended to help all youth develop the skills and attitudes needed to find and keep employment, obtain and maintain meaningful adult lifestyles, and develop positive social interactions. The most accepted outcome of success for school-to-work programs serving at risk youth is their eventual employment in a *career pathway*.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK STRATEGIES FOR AT RISK STUDENTS

School-to-work transition services originally began as an attempt to bridge the protective environment of the secondary school with adult life for students with disabilities. Today the service eligibility has been broadened to include youth with economic and educational disadvantages, limited English proficient youth, single teenage parents, chronically truant youth, substance abusing youth, and juvenile offenders. A wide array of services are often necessary, including legal help, housing services, health care, financial aid, employment assistance, career guidance, basic skills education, occupational training, language assistance, transportation, and child car to assist these at risk youth.

In response to calls for a more effective transition between school and work, recent discussion about restructuring and reforming high school education have focused on the need to improve the quality of employment-related training. As government agencies and others studying the problem have considered the components of school-to-work transition over the past few years, a consensus has emerged. Experts feel that an effective approach must incorporate certain elements for all students including those at risk. These elements are:

1. *Greater integration of academic and vocational curricula.* More academic content needs to be added to vocational courses and traditional academic courses, such as reading, math, and science must be taught with a more applied focus.

2. *Structured links to postsecondary education.* Programs must build bridges from high school to postsecondary opportunities and provide for the eventual transfer to a 4-year institution, as well as to a 2-year community or technical college.

3. *Structured work experience.* A significant amount of learning should take place on the job, and this learning should be integrated with classroom instruction. All students should be able to be awarded academic and occupational credentials that are widely recognized and transportable.

4. *Broad involvement in the governance of school-to-work transition programs.* Employers, workers, postsecondary institutions, community groups, and government agencies should be involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of program and in the evaluation of outcomes. (OERI, 1994, p 58).

School reform and school-to-work activities are suggested for all students, however, the National Dropout Prevention Center in 1993 conducted a survey to answer the question, "*Is school reform serving the at-risk population?*" (Duttweiler, 1994)

Returns were received from 454 of the nearly 2,000 National Dropout Prevention Network members about specific strategies that help students in at-risk situations to learn successfully and graduate from high school. In helping students from at-risk situations learn successfully, a majority of the respondents found the following strategies to be either highly or moderately effective: active learning

instructional strategies (78.9%); alternative school environments (74.5%); mentoring/tutoring programs (73.8%); personal and social skills instruction (72.1%); family support systems (69.1%); programs for pregnant teenagers (68.8%); and, preparation for work programs (66.3%).

In a refutation of practices which are sometimes the norm in many school districts, respondents indicated their beliefs that some programs or strategies are not effective or are only somewhat effective in helping students from at risk situations learn successfully. They included: retention in grade (84.4%); homogeneous grouping or tracking (69.0%); pull-out programs (67.0%); and, in-school suspension (66.3%). Table 3 summarizes the responses of the effectiveness of the various program strategies.

Table 3

Effective and Ineffective Programs and Strategies

Programs and Strategies	Highly /Moderately Successful	Somewhat or Not at All Successful
Alternative school environments	74.5%	21.1%
Programs for pregnant teenagers	68.8%	29.5%
Substance abuse programs	56.1%	42.9%
Pull-out programs	28.2%	67.0%
Summer enrichment programs	51.8%	47.5%

Table 3 (cont.)

Effective and Ineffective Programs and Strategies

Preparation for work	66.3%	32.6%
Retention in grade	11.2%	84.8%
Mentoring/tutoring programs	73.8%	25.7%
In-school suspension	32.4%	66.3%
Family support systems	69.1%	34.4%
Extended day programs	54.4%	43.0%
Early childhood programs	80.1%	19.0%
Active learning strategies	78.9%	20.5%
Personal & social skills instruction	72.1%	27.3%
Homogeneous grouping or tracking	28.1%	69.0%

Additional research (Gambone, 1993) supports the findings listed above and also proposes systemwide attention to specific strategies in effective school-to-work programs. These strategies are:

- comprehensive assessments;
- regular monitoring of the developmental status and needs of youth as they move through programs;
- high quality work experience and educational components that engage youth and hold them in programs for a period sufficient to allow them to derive developmental benefits;

- opportunities to participate in teams, discuss important life issues, and participate in the governance of programs;
- one-to-one relationships with adults trained in understanding and facilitating the developmental process;
- support services aimed at those problems that typically prevent disadvantaged youth from maintaining their participation in program interventions; such as, lack of shelter, child care, etc. and,
- program structures and activities that promote and implement principles of fairness.

Other research clearly supports mentoring as a primary strategy and especially effective with at-risk youth. (Crockett and Smink, 1991). Mentoring at-risk students has become one of the fastest growing and frequently used strategies in programs for at risk youth. An analysis of dropout prevention and recovery programs conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education concluded that certain services were more effective in encouraging dropouts to return to school and complete their education. Programs that included a mentoring component were successful with 83 percent of the at risk students and 70 percent of the retrieved dropouts. (Illinois State Board of Education, 1990).

Burac and Bullock (1993) reported the results of research conducted by the National Center for Research on Vocational Education on exemplary components of special needs programs. The results of their research were obtained from special needs program

administrators, research studies, studies by state boards of education on best practices, literature on effective instruction, legislation, and textbooks on strategies that produce positive outcomes for individuals from special populations. Examples of positive outcomes included decreased dropout rates, increased number of dropouts returning to school, increased employment percentage, increased percentage of students continuing postsecondary education and improved student performance. The exemplary framework resulting from the research consists of 20 components grouped into five clusters as follows:

EXEMPLARY VOCATIONAL SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM COMPONENTS

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- strong administrative leadership and support
- financial support
- staff development
- formative program evaluation
- summative program evaluation

FORMALIZED ARTICULATION AND COMMUNICATION

- family/parental involvement and support
- notification of both students and parents regarding vocational opportunities
- involvement in individualized educational planning
- formalized transition planning
- intra and inter-agency collaboration

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- individualized curriculum modifications
- integration of academic and vocational curricula
- appropriate instructional settings
- cooperative learning experiences

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

- assessment of individual vocational interests
- instructional support services
- ongoing career guidance and counseling

OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- work experience
- job placement services
- follow-up of graduates and nongraduates

In an additional attempt to focus on successful program strategies used with at risk youth, the current writers performed a literature review of 20 exemplary programs for a variety at risk youth categories. Programs which were identified as exemplary reflect a given point in time and were selected based upon their effective use of workplace strategies. Since programs for at risk youth are supported through various funding mechanisms, often tend to be innovative and risk-taking, and frequently rely on voluntary community efforts, readers are asked to contact the various project directors for the current status of each of the reviewed programs.

Individual program profiles identify the primary at risk category, location and background of the program, essential school and workplace elements, and unique characteristics for possible review and replication. Program profiles are found in Appendix A.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The following section summarizes the key components that have been employed across a variety of geographical areas and occupations by programs serving at risk youth.

Although each reviewed exemplary program addressed a different category of at risk youth an analysis of the selected programs indicated some key features and program strategies common to every successful program. The review reinforced the findings of the earlier work done by Burac and Bullock. A discussion of the common features and selected examples from successful programs are organized around the themes of program administration and leadership, community support, curriculum and instruction, comprehensive support services, and career exposure experiences.

Program Administration and Leadership

- Strong administrative leadership and support- Communities often hesitate to invest in initiatives for out-of-school youth, including community stakeholders in education and training systems--local practitioners, program developers and administrators, policy makers, community groups, local businesses, schools, parents and guardians, and the students themselves. People developing initiatives for out-of-

school youth should recognize that they may have to convince each set of stakeholders of the value of these initiatives. They need to persuade young people that additional education will benefit them at work and throughout life. They need to demonstrate to schools that these young people can succeed if offered another chance. They need to convince policy makers, local businesses, and the community that their investments will prepare a stronger workforce and promote economic development. And they need to prepare the school system to work with alternative programs serving out-of-school youth.

- Sufficient financial support-Strong agency commitment is evident, particularly when it is most needed--to follow-through with the funding of programs after seed capital has been exhausted. For example, Project COFFEE (Cooperative Federation for Educational Experiences), an exemplary program for economically disadvantaged youth, began in 1979 by combining special education and vocational education monies and the efforts of individual school districts, a local teacher education center, and a career education consortium. After the first three pilot years, the participating school districts took over financial responsibility for the program.
- Staff development- People make the difference, especially caring people who genuinely like and want to work with at risk youth. Program staff and students need to be provided sufficient flexibility within general policy guidelines to make needed program improvements. Staff must also be provided with opportunities to

attend professional development activities which can assist them with the necessary pedagogical skills for dealing with at risk populations. In addition, staff must provide high expectations for their students. Out-of-school youth are often viewed as "less able" than their in-school peers because of their histories of poor performance in the classroom. Their lower academic achievement levels, however, are often tied to diminished expectations for these youth, not to lack of ability. Teachers and workplace supervisors who demand high levels of performance often get what they ask for. To succeed, out-of-school youth may require additional support services, but program developers should recognize that they youth have just as much potential to achieve as do their in-school peers.

- Formative program evaluation - Feedback in exemplary programs is given to students immediately and on a frequent basis, whether in a classroom or worksite-based setting. Successful school-to-work programs for out-of-school youth focus on long-term goals, but use short-term assessments to measure their progress. They typically look at benchmarks that measure changes in attitudes towards school and work, skills utilized at work, and academic achievement. Benchmarks must further addresses whether youth become more motivated to continue their education, and whether or not a program's goals match participant needs. Regular assessment allows service providers to redirect attention if program goals are not being met, or if youth are not satisfied with the results of participation.

• Summative program evaluation- Biannual or annual summative evaluations are conducted internally or by outside evaluators. Since the literature review and related research has identified common features for exemplary programs we suggest a standardized approach for state-approved and state-funded school-to-work programs for at risk youth. The research cited earlier by Burac and Bullock may provide a potential framework for program evaluation. In addition, O' Sullivan and Tennant performed an extensive review of the research and evaluation literature describing programs for at risk students throughout the nation and identified eleven standards and thirty-one indicators for at-risk programs. (O'Sullivan and Tennant, 1993)

The standards and indicators identify characteristics of high quality programs for at-risk students. The standards express, in general terms, characteristics of high quality programs and the indicators describe more specific aspects of high quality programs. Suggested approaches for measuring the standards and indicators are also identified. Programs meeting every standard and indicator would most likely, in the opinion of the researchers be deemed exemplary and suitable for replication within the state of Ohio. It is suggested that serious consideration be given to incorporating standards, indicators, and processes into an evaluation system for at risk programs within the State. The *Standards and Indicators of Quality for the Evaluation of Programs for At-Risk Students* identified by O'Sullivan and Tennant can be found in Appendix B.

Community Support

- Family/parental involvement - Parental involvement is actively sought and encouraged in successful programs. An example of parental involvement is found in the VIP (Vocational Interdisciplinary Program located in Miami, Florida for chronically truant students. Parental participation is viewed as a vital part of the program and is sought to assist with the monitoring of student attendance. Frequent phone calls, letters to parents, as well as home visitations forms a collaborative bond between the parent/guardian, school, and student. The intensive and personal attention is what program administrators believe makes the program successful.
- Notification of program opportunities - Exemplary programs have established outreach programs. Youth who drop out of school are typically not motivated to continue their education. Program developers must use outreach strategies (e.g. brochures, in-class announcements, local print and broadcast media, mailings to homes, job postings, etc.) to stress the benefits of additional education and training by highlighting the successes of previous or present participants. Mandating participation, however, often increases the cynicism of out-of-school youth, creating an environment that is not conducive to learning and negatively influencing other, more willing participants.
- Individualized educational planning - Exemplary programs for at risk youth use individualized educational planning. Several exemplary

programs for at risk youth incorporate the use of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to assist with program planning. A premier example of this approach is the Jobs for America's Graduates program, located in 21 different states with 550 programs. The component for non-seniors uses career specialists to help young people discover their career interests and aptitudes and to develop an Individualized Educational Plan. An experiential based learning curriculum is developed for the student and participation in a motivational student organization called "The Career Association" is encouraged to pique student interest and involvement with the program.

- Formalized transition planning - Exemplary programs have established procedures for identifying transition goals and objectives for each participant and periodic reviews to discuss progress toward them. The Cornell Youth and Work Program for educationally disadvantaged youth is located in Binghamton, New York and focuses on formalized apprenticeships in manufacturing, administration and office technology, and health care. Classroom time is spent learning theories and practices in various fields, planning and processing what will and does occur in the workplace. Students spend two years of high school and two years of community college time in a well-planned and organized program that effectively moves them from adolescence to adulthood as productive, community-oriented workers.
- Intra- and inter-agency collaboration - Intra-and inter-agency cooperation and collaboration are essential to exemplary programs. A

variety of community resources are called upon to deliver programs and services. For example, The Stay-In-School Program in Miami, Florida uses staff from 10 different community agencies to provide students with intensive counseling, advocacy, social service support and home visits. Involving all stakeholders in developing school-to-work systems and goals fosters their long-term participation. This strategy also helps ensure that the system's components are coordinated and duplication of service prevented. It also reinforces to all stakeholders the importance of their roles in the school-to-work system and ensures that their individual needs are considered.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Individualized curriculum modifications - Programs are tailored to the diverse and special needs of the students, rather than to the convenience needs of the school district and/or staff in exemplary programs. The use of new technologies, the adaptation of lesson plans, and the use of adult mentors are examples of modifying curriculum in at risk programs. For example, Project LEAP (Learn, Earn, and Prosper) located in University, Mississippi uses a unique one-way video, two-way audio distance learning broadcast program from the University of Mississippi to teach students basic reading curriculum and other academic skills toward preparation for the GED.
- Integration of academic and vocational curricula - Exemplary programs for at risk youth integrate academic and vocational curricula. Programs must be seen by participants to be relevant, realistic, and

rapidly lead to employment. Business and industry, in particular, are viewed as an equal partners with the schools in curriculum and programming ventures. Because of their skepticism about the education system, out-of-school youth must continually be shown how what is learned in the classroom relates to the workplace and to their future. This requires the coordination and cooperation of direct service providers, such as teachers and workplace supervisors. For example, members of industry must directly work with teachers to ensure that coursework is directly applied to workplace experiences.

One example is The Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy in Oakland, California which serves minority at risk youth with a history of academic failure and poor attendance. Curriculum and staff development activities receive direct input from local employers. Block scheduling and small class sizes make the Academy a small cohesive community within the larger school community. Students take double periods of science in addition to other basic school requirements related to the health care industry. College students from the nearby University of California serve as tutors. Community service and summer jobs in the health care industry are also strongly emphasized for Academy participants.

- Appropriate instructional settings - Exemplary programs for at risk youth are often located in nontraditional settings. Many at risk and out-of-school youth dislike traditional school and classroom settings. Accordingly, successful programs must operate in settings most

conducive to student learning and availability, which are often very different than those of comprehensive high schools. For example, TIGER, Inc., a student-owned and managed corporation, located in Rothsay, Minnesota runs the town's lumberyard, hardware, and grocery stores which were in danger of going out of business. TIGER, Inc. operates on the philosophy that student ownership in the business and the nontraditional setting itself helps generate more meaningful student interest and involvement.

- Cooperative learning experiences - School-to-work initiatives must ensure that the business community is recognized as an equal partner in preparing youth for the workforce. Engaging employers in programs for at risk youth may be difficult because businesses often fear that these youth lack the skills and commitment required for success. Employers must therefore be convinced that participation will benefit their organization. The BETA 2000 program in Boulder, Colorado, a training program for students with physical disabilities, was designed specifically in response to the corporate need for a workforce trained to perform specific targeted jobs. Companies provide extensive support from training to equipment and material donations. Other programs incorporate a service-learning component to demonstrate the relevance of school and work to community development.

Comprehensive Support Services

- Assessment of individual's career interests - Youth must be active participants in their learning. Young people who leave school or do not

continue their education after high school often do so out of boredom or frustration with the school system. Programs for out-of-school youth have overcome this problem by working with youth to identify their strengths and career interests, ensuring that courses and work placements reflect these interests. This approach allows youth a role in program and curriculum development and provides them with a sense of control over their education and, as a result, their future. Operation GRAD located in Battle Creek, Michigan uses a hands on curriculum developed by Junior Achievement and an extensive network of business partners to actively involve students in cooperative education, internships, volunteer, and entrepreneurial ventures.

- Instructional support services - The diversity of at risk students requires an array of support services to match participant needs. The lack of necessary support services, such as child care, transportation, and substance abuse counseling, is often one reason that youth drop out of school. Programs that successfully bring out-of-school youth back into the education system and keep them there ensure that the appropriate services are provided.
- On-going guidance and counseling- On-going counseling and guidance by program staff and adult mentors is required. Youth often drop out because school seems to them to be disconnected from "real life" and the world of work. Program developers must therefore ensure that the skills acquired outside of work relate not only to the workplace

but also to a youth's interests. Many have designed programs around distinct occupational and workplace experiences, a basic characteristic of school-to-work.

The Vocational Village High School program located in Portland, Oregon serves emotionally impaired youth. Students spend two hours each day in a vocational cluster of the student's choosing. Local business and industry assist with classroom instruction, as well as train students through worksite-based internships which frequently lead to direct employment. Individualized attention from teachers and counselors along with student pride in and emotional ownership of the program are viewed as crucial components to the success of the program.

Career Exposure Experiences

- Career exposure opportunities - Students participating in exemplary programs are encouraged to participate in *experiential learning* activities such as *job shadowing*, *school based enterprises*, *service learning* and *work experience* to apply what they learn in the classroom and on the job toward contributing back to the community and to their peers. Frequently, out-of-school youth do not have role models who inspire them either to stay in school or succeed in the workplace. Many programs provide a caring adult mentor--perhaps someone who has experienced similar problems--for each participant. These mentors, who typically become involved in all aspects of a youth's participation in a school-to-work system, have helped provide many

young people with the advice and encouragement required to succeed. Workforce LA, an urban dropout prevention program for low income and educationally deprived students uses city employees to serve as student mentors. Students in the Workforce LA program receive 12-30 hours of work experience for which they receive financial incentives and training benefits. Academic and personal support critical to the success of the program are provide by the mentors.

- Job placement services - Exemplary programs provide placement services to participants including assisting students to match their abilities and interests to appropriate career goals, preparing resumes, practicing job interviewing techniques, using job search strategies, and identifying postsecondary learning opportunities.
- Follow-up of completers and noncompleters - Exemplary programs for at risk youth collect data for funding agencies and for documentation and evaluation purposes (e.g. job retention rates, student promotion rates, salaries, number of completers, additional training and education received, etc.)

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

State Agency Recommendations

Based upon a review of exemplary model programs and related research dealing with at risk youth a number of state agency recommendations are presented for review and consideration.

It is recommended that the state agency should:

1. Establish a systematic process for delivery of programs and services for at risk youth. Appropriate state agencies should jointly establish interagency agreements to develop a strategic plan designating personnel, funds, application and evaluation criteria for programs and services; develop a coordinated process for program development, implementation, and evaluation; and, implement a plan for cost-sharing, joint funding, and inservice training of state and local agency personnel.
2. Require coordination between local service agencies and the schools as part of the application and approval process.
3. Mandate parental involvement in programmatic activities.
4. Establish a core curriculum for use in local school-to-work. partnerships including applied academics, employability skills, and life management instruction for all local participants.
5. Establish a management information system to assist with decision-making and program evaluation. The system should be used for cost-benefit analysis and for conducting basic research on school-to-work activities for at-risk youth.
6. Establish a program evaluation process to monitor local school-to-work programs for at-risk youth.

Local school-to-work partnership recommendations

It is recommended that each local school-to-work partnership servicing at risk youth:

1. Establish a clear mission for the program. The basic mission for the program should be that students will remain in school, acquire academic and employability skills, and to receive a high school diploma or GED with the same level of competency required for regular school programs. The ultimate objective of any local program should be the placement of a student into a career pathway of employment or further advanced education or training.
2. Employ a staff committed and dedicated to understanding the issues and problems facing youth in a warm, flexible environment. Staff should have a sensitivity to the stresses that young adults face and to the inner conflicts that they often experience. Staff must recognize that the behavior of at risk youth is often a symptom of their struggle for identity and independence.
3. Establish clear policies, rules, and procedures of what teachers expect of students and what student and their parents can expect form teachers. At risk youth must take responsibility for their own learning and utilize the instructional staff to assist with problems.
4. Provide a curriculum relevant to student needs incorporating applied academic, employability, and life management skills. The curriculum should develop applied academic skills within a career-oriented focus. Employability instruction should stress good work habits such as dependability, punctuality, acceptance of constructive criticism from supervisors, and communication skills. Instruction should also focus on job seeking and getting skills such as job search

strategies, dress and grooming, completion of application and resumes and job interviewing skills. Life Management instruction such as budgeting, parenting skills and independent living should be part of the curriculum design.

5. The instructional program should be flexible enough to accommodate individual needs, provide authentic assessment and immediate feedback within a highly structured approach.

6. Incorporate career guidance, counseling and career planning into the programs. Students need career information and the opportunity to develop short and long term plans toward a goal. Student portfolios and Employability Development Plans should be essential elements in the process.

7. Incorporate informal counseling on an individual and group basis into the program. At risk youth need emotional support and a process for identifying and resolving potential or existing problems.

8. Operate as a service-oriented agency. School-to-Work partnerships should develop linkages at all levels so that students can move from one course, program, or service to another---between or within agencies. The linkages can be both within single agencies or institutions and between multiple agencies or institutions.

9. Provide career and occupational exposure based upon available businesses and community resources, student interests, abilities and aptitudes into local programs. Service learning, job shadowing,

mentoring, school-based enterprises, and, if possible, paid work experience should be part of the curriculum.

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APPENDIX A

Economically Disadvantaged Youth (Rural Setting)

Project COFFEE
(Cooperative Federation for Educational Experiences)
Oxford High School Annex
Main Street
Oxford, MA 01540
(617) 987-2591
Sean M. Gilrein - Project Director
Michael Fields - COFFEE NDN Coordinator

Setting

A regional dropout prevention/reclamation program, project COFFEE targets 120 students from 18 school districts in Southern Massachusetts who are at-risk due to the rural, economically depressed environment in which they live. The 18 school districts in the region have a combined student population of approximately 45,000.

Background

The program began in 1979 by combining federal special education and vocational education money and the efforts of individual school districts, a local teacher education center, and a career education consortium. After the first three years, the participating school districts took over the financial responsibilities of the program's operation. What began as a carpentry program for 25 students referred from three school districts grew in size and scope.

School Elements

Project Coffee is an integrated program that emphasizes occupational and academic development. Services now offered by Project COFFEE include basic skills, occupational education, group

Project COFFEE (cont.)

and individual counseling, pre-employment skills, experimental learning, and computer-assisted instruction. Job entry skills, job placement, job shadowing experiences, and related work-study programs are available to students in the following occupational areas: computer maintenance/repair, word processing, building and grounds maintenance, horticulture/agriculture, and distributive education.

The program functions as a school within a school and is housed in two small attached buildings behind Oxford High School, with satellite classes held at participating high schools. Five classes are held each morning, with students divided into groups of 10 on the basis of age and vocational interests, staying with the same group throughout the program in order to develop peer-group relationships.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are developed by students in conjunction with instructors. Instruction is mostly individualized, with some group work. Training is both classroom- and worksite-based. Students who are falling behind or failing in their classroom work are not allowed to continue their off-site training until they show a positive shift in academic performance.

Workplace Elements

With the exception of the building and grounds maintenance program, all programs operate as small businesses. School-based enterprises are used to develop technical and interpersonal skills. For instance, the word processing program has a typing center business in

Project COFFEE (cont.)

which students complete job orders for actual customers. Student also engage in job shadowing and internships. Unpaid internship opportunities are made available for students within related, local business and industry, such as Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC).

Student program participants, with the help of sponsoring businesses, share what they have learned with the community through special exhibitions, demonstrations, and participation in community projects.

Unique Characteristics

Project COFFEE has been replicated in numerous school districts across the country.

Recognition

This project has undergone rigorous scrutiny and has been validated twice by the U.S. Department of Education's Joint Dissemination Review Panel and is a demonstration program of the National Diffusion Network.

Economically Disadvantaged Youth (Rural Setting)

TIGER Inc. - Tiger Mart
Rothsay Public School - ISD #850
Box 247
123 2nd Street, N.W.
Rothsay, MN 56579
(218) 867-2735
Pat Conn - Principal

Setting

A high school student-owned and managed corporation, TIGER, Inc. operates Tiger Mart, a joint venture with the Rothsay Public School ISD #850. The grocery store is located in Rothsay, a rural town in Minnesota with a population of 450.

Background

TIGER stands for "Teenage Innovative Group Entreprenuers of Rothsay." The corporation was formed in the spring of 1991, with students paying $5 per person membership fees to become part of the legally recognized non-profit corporation that runs the town's lumberyard, hardware, and grocery stores which were in danger of going out of business. Tiger Mart is the town's formerly failing grocery store.

School Elements

Through coursework in school, students learn the ins and outs of running a small business. Examples are given using TIGER, Inc. and its business dealings.

Tiger Mart (Cont.)

Work Elements

Student training programs and mentorships are provided on the job. Former employees of the nearly bankrupted grocery store are employed by Tiger Mart expressly for their on the job knowledge and skills which they impart while working alongside students. Local business people donate time to teach specific skills, such as accounting and finance.

Unique Elements

TIGER, Inc. operates on the philosophy that student ownership in the business helps generate more meaningful interest. As the project's program advisor says of his students, "They deal with every day business decisions, obstacles, and requirements that have challenged them far beyond the classroom. If they make a mistake in the classroom, they could receive a lower grade, if they make a mistake at Tiger Mart, they could lose a business."

Recognition

Tiger Mart is a participant in the Ashland Oil Business-Education Partnership Honors program. The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration regards it as an exemplary school-to-work program and lists its on its on-line directory of outstanding programs. Access is available by calling 1-800-488-0901. TIGER, Inc. was also selected as an exemplary program in 1994 by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the National

Tiger Mart (Cont.)

Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL). AED's 1994 monograph *School to Work: Making the Transition* (p.7) was the source of this information. Copies can be obtained by calling (202) 884-8000.

Economically Disadvantaged Youth
(Urban and Rural Settings)

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)
Suite 200, 1729 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 684-9479
Judith M. Shilling - HRD Director

Setting

Headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, JAG reaches statewide to students at risk for dropping out due to economic disadvantagement.

Background

Created in 1979 under the leadership of former Governor Pete DuPont and a group of business and educational leaders interesting in tackling the high dropout and student unemployment rates, JAG's mission is to create statewide school-to-work transition programs that address those issues. According to 1995 figures, JAG has impacted more than 180,000 at-risk and disadvantaged youth since its inception. An estimated 30,000 students participate in JAG annually.

School Elements

JAG has two basic components. The first is a drop-out prevention program for non-seniors. In this program career specialists work to keep young people discover their career interests and aptitudes and to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Experiential learning-based curriculum and a highly motivational student organization called "The Career Association" are used to pique student

JAG (cont.)

interest. Both academic abilities and attitudes are targeted for improvement.

Work Elements

The second basic component of JAG is the school-to-work transition program for seniors. In it, seniors focus on achieving competency in 37 employability skills clustered into career exploration, job attainment, job survival, basic skills, and self and leadership development skills. Job shadowing, field trips to businesses and occupational guest speakers are important components of JAG. More recently, JAG has been testing model worksite-based learning.

Unique Characteristics

The program's concepts are readily transferable and according to 1995 figures, 550 JAG programs had been implemented in 21 different states.

Recognition

JAG won the 1990 U.S. Department of Labor's "Labor Investing for Tomorrow" (LIFT) award. This program was heralded as exemplary at the 1994 National Leadership Forum on School-To-Work held August 4-6 in Washington, D.C. A thorough profile is available through the U.S. Department of Labor's Training Technology Resource Center's on-line information data base by calling 1-800-488-0901.

Economically Disadvantaged Youth

(Urban Setting)

Operation GRAD
(Gathering Resources for Adult Decisions)
Calhoun Area Technology Center
Operation GRAD
56 East Michigan Avenue
Battle Creek, MI 49017
Dr. Barbara A. Rupp-Project Director
(616) 964-0372 FAX (616) 965-9583

Setting

A program designed to help high school dropouts earn their diplomas and obtain marketable technical skills located in Battle Creek, MI. The average number of students served is 143 each year. The Operation GRAD theme, *Drop In and Learn to Live* changed traditional education to alternative edcuation for its students, making it a real option for dropouts to *Drop-In* and change their lives for the better.

Background

The program began in 1989 when the Calhoun Area Vocational Center and the Junior Achievement of South Central Michigan partnered to take a leadership role in developing an educational program specifically designed for at risk youth. The program gained the attention of the W.K Kellogg Foundation and was awarded funding through the Kellogg Youth Initiatives Program.

Project GRAD (Cont.)

School Elements

The program uses a curriculum developed by Junior Achievement relying heavily on Applied and Integrated Learning.

Venture capital for entrepreneurship is part of the program. School districts from Calhoun county are active participants in the program. Business partnerships are an integral component to Operation GRAD.

Workplace Elements

Cooperative education, internships, and volunteerism are unique characteristics of the program. Business partners throughout the community provide community networking and support.

Unique Characteristics

Operation GRAD promotes entrepreneurial education in cooperation with Junior Achievement.

Recognition

Awarded funding from W. E. Kellogg Foundation under Youth Initiatives Program and selected for Michigan Plus Award.

Economically Disadvantaged
(Urban Setting)

Stay-In-School Program
Training & Employment
Council of Florida
3403 NW 82nd Avenue
Suite 300
Miami, FL 33122-1029
(305) 470-1620, ext. 327
Pat Lee - Coordinator

Setting

Miami is the setting for this South Florida Stay in School Program for students 14 and older, grades 9 through 12, from poverty-level families, who have been identified as potential dropouts.

Background

A joint effort of the Private Industry Council (PIC) and the South Florida Employment and Training Consortium, the Stay in School Program uses staff from 10 different community agencies to provide students with intensive counseling, advocacy, social service support and home visits. Approximately 2500 students in 13 senior high schools are currently being serviced by this program. 1995 statistics (compiled since 1986) show 9,050 students have stayed in school, 4791 students have graduated, 1575 have attended college and 200 have been scholarship recipients as a result of the program's efforts.

Stay in School (cont.)

School Elements

Academic assistance, including remediation and tutoring, is provided to students in the Stay in School Program. Preparation for college entrance, financial aid and vouchering to cover costs at Miami-Dade Community College or at the DCPS Vocational Technical Education Centers is also available.

Workplace Elements

Mentoring from local business people and employability skills training help interest students in the world of work. As funding permits, participants in the Stay in School Program are guaranteed summer jobs through local businesses. Financial assistance is provided to help with job searches.

Unique Characteristics

A success rate of 92% has been achieved in retaining students in high school through graduation. A wide number of community agencies intevene on various fronts, for what is now called "wrap around" services.

Recognition

In 1991, the Stay in School Program was awarded the Job Training Partnership Act Presidential Award as, "an example of a successful public-private partnership that focuses on improving the lives of at-risk youths. The major components of this program can be accessed by calling 1-800-488-0901.

Youth with Physical Disabilities

BETA 2000
Boulder Valley Public Schools
6600 Araphahoe
Boulder, CO 80303
(303) 447-5257
Philip J. Stroup - Director

Setting

Located in progressive Boulder, Colorado, BETA 2000 is an 18 week work-oriented training program for students with physical disabilities. Training partnerships are formed between companies looking for permanent employees with industry specific job skills. Initial training is done through the area technical education center, while later training is done at job sites. Once students successfully complete training, they receive regular wages for their work.

Background

Unlike many programs which focus solely on the needs of the students, BETA 2000 focuses more on the needs of the employer. It was designed in response to the corporate need for a workforce trained to perform specific targeted jobs. However, employer participants are recruited on the basis of student opportunities for advancement, further training and applicability of skills to other companies.

School Elements

A student's first nine weeks in the BETA Program are spent learning the work habits and technical skills identified by the

BETA 2000 (cont.)

partnership employer. Coursework is designed and taught by both vocational education instructors and company trainers.

Work Elements

Students spend their second nine weeks on the job at their respective partnership employment sites. If a BETA student demonstrates the appropriate competencies and skills required by the employer, he/she is hired into an entry-level position that possesses the career pathways necessary to achieve economic independence. Companies provide extensive support from training to equipment to materials.

Unique Characteristics

BETA 2000 takes a typically difficult to place population and supplies them with more pertinent training than is possessed by the average worker. More importantly, BETA 2000 doesn't place students in just any job, but in a job with a future. Long-term self-sufficiency is emphasized at every turn.

Recognition

BETA 2000 is a U.S. Department of Education model demonstration project. It has also been recognized as an exemplary program by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. BETA 2000 was a featured program at the fourth annual National Leadership Forum on School-To-Work held in Boston in 1995.

Youth with Learning Disabilities

Project LEAP
Department of Resource Development
University of Mississippi
University, MS 38677
(601) 232-7238
Ed Meek - Director

Setting

Project LEAP (Learn, Earn and Prosper) is an education program for young adults who have dropped out of school due to learning problems, specifically reading. The goal of the Project is to take low or non-readers to a level of functional literacy, defined as 8.9 or higher, so they can pass the GED.

Background

Project LEAP is an adult education initiative by the Mississippi Department of Human Services produced by the University of Mississippi. It is the first 20 hour per week, statewide literacy program for welfare recipients.

School Elements

A unique one-way video, two-way audio distance learning broadcast program from the University of Mississippi which is viewed at various learning centers across the state is used to teach students basic reading curriculum and other academic skills toward preparation for the GED. An open-entry/open exit curriculum and satellite service are designed specifically to accomodate diverse learners. Each student follows an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is developed at each

Project LEAP (cont.)

of the school sites where they receive instruction. The TV curriculum consists of Beginning Language Arts,Intermediate Language Arts, Intermediate Math, GED Preparation and "Information You Can Use."

Workplace Elements

Life coping skills, job readiness, and career awareness are taught by program instructors. Speakers from local business and industry are brought in to emphasize the connection between success in school and success in the workplace. At this point, there is no worksite-based learning component.

Unique Characteristics

Small group learning, journaling, peer tutoring, and group discussions help personalize school for the returnng students. Participants give the program high marks for ease of learning and its practical value.

Recognition

Project LEAP is recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor as an exemplary school-to-work program. A profile of the program can be found on-line through its Training Technology Resource Center by calling 1-800-488-0901.

Youth with Physical and Emotional Impairments

Vocational Village High School
P.O. Box 3107
Portland, Oregon, 97208
(503) 280-97208
Alcena Boozer, Alternative Education Supervisor

Setting

A former factory building in southeast Portland offers the benefits of a small school setting within a metropolitan area Students take pride in this private-like school setting.

Background

The school was developed by and is operated by Portland area school districts for students who have dropped out of regular school programs because their needs were not being met in traditional classroom settings. Students range in age from 12 to 21. Most have physical and emotional problems which lead to academic problems. Economic hardship is another prevalent factor among students.

School Elements

Classes are offered both day and evening, with an estimated 200 students enrolled in daytime programming and another 65 enrolled in evening programming. Self-paced and performance-based, both academic and vocational work are required of students.

Workplace Elements

Two hours of each school day are spent in a vocational cluster of the student's choosing. Programs are offered in the areas of child care,

Vocational Village High School (cont.)

food service, graphics, industrial mechanics, marketing, office practice, metals and welding, health occupations, and electronics. Local business and industry assist with classroom instruction, as well as train students through worksite-based internship experiences. This sometimes serves as a direct link to employment.

Unique Characteristics

Individualized attention from teachers and counselors, along with student pride in and emotional ownership of the program, are viewed as crucial components of its success. Motivated students are able to earn credits faster than at a regular high school.

Recognition

The Vocational Village Program was selected as an exemplary program and highlighted by students at-risk researcher Shirley Wells in her 1990 book *At Risk Youth: Identification, Programs and Recommendations*, published by Teacher Ideas Press, Englewood, Colorado. Wells' book served as the source for this profile.

Females Minority Youth

Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy
4351 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94611
(510) 658-5300
Patricia Clark - Director

Setting

Oakland County, California, an area highly populated with Spanish-speaking and African American residents, was targeted for this minority at-risk student program. Students grades 10-12 participate in the program. Most enter the program with a history of academic failure and poor attendance. Approximately 50-60 students per grade can be accomodated annually.

Background

The Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy began in 1985 in response to the critical need to increase the number of underrepresented minorities in the health professions. Local hospital CEOs noted the problem and contacted local school system officials. Start-up funding was obtained through a Peninsula Academies Replication grant from the California Department of Labor.

School Elements

Recruited from staff at Oakland Tech, program instructors originally worked through the summer of 1985 on curriculum development. Curriculum and staff development activities now receive input from local employers. A computer consultant is used to work

Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy (cont.)

with staff and students on developing multimedia learning. Block scheduling and small class sizes make the Academy a small, cohesive community within the larger school community. Students take double periods of science in addition to other basic school requirements. Instead of "dumbing down," the Academy escalates academic requirements for its students. College students from nearby University of California at Berkley serve as tutors. All students are required to complete prerequisite courses for higher education health courses, thus setting the stage for further education.

Workplace Elements

Mentoring, internship placements and part-time jobs are provided by local healthcare employers. Community service and summer jobs are also strongly emphasized for Academy participants. Students seek entry-level jobs in the healthcare industry upon graduation. Many combine postsecondary study and health/bioscience work. The Academy helps with college application and entry, as well as job placements.

Unique Characteristics

Small classroom sizes allow for more individualized assistance. Some high-achieving students are admitted in the program to provide academic role models and to offset at-risk labeling practices by those outside the school. Community partnerships, particularly with minority organizations have helped make the program successful. For

Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy (cont.)

example, the director of the East Bay Black Quality Care Consortium divides her time between the Academy and the Consortium. Parents are also frequently involved through contacts and activities.

Recognition

The Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy was awarded a Youth Apprenticship Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor based on its excellent track record. Information on this program was culled from a 1992 report called *From High School to High-Skilled Health Careers: New Models of Work and Learning in Health Care,* published by Jobs for the Future, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Single Parents and Pregnant Teens

OASIS Independent Study Center
7828 Monterey Street
Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 842-0822
Bess Johnson, Director

Setting

The Glory Unified School District – Gilroy, California.

Background

Implemented in 1986, this California model for a dropout recovery center is an alternative education program through which dropouts can meet their academic and personal needs, while developing positive study and work habits.

School Elements

Courses required for graduation are offered via independent study, individual tutoring, and small group classes. Childcare is made available.

Workplace Elements

Students can contract with community businesses for worksite-based education opportunities to complement classroom learning. Real-world job education is stressed and students who do demonstrate workplace maturity and sound job skills during worksite-based training are given first consideration in the hiring process. A community liaison is on staff and community groups work with OASIS to provide job opportunities, service projects, counseling, and tutoring.

OASIS Independent Study Center (cont.)

Unique Characteristics

A multitude of site-based support services for single parents and pregnant teens are scheduled regularly for participants in the program, as it helps to cut down on absenteeism.

Recognition

OASIS is recognized by the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University as an exemplary program. Information on OASIS was accessed through Clemson's Internet site.

Limited English Proficiency Students

Workforce Los Angeles (LA) Youth Academy
Los Angeles Unified School District
450 North Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 625-6251
Lynne Porter - Project Director

Setting

Known as "Workforce LA," this urban dropout prevention program has as its mission to annually prepare 1000 young people between the ages of 14 and 20 for success not only in school but also in the workplace. Telecommunication, banking services, and public service are the project's areas of focus.

Background

Workforce LA is a joint project of the Los Angeles Community College District, the Los Angeles Unified School District, and local industry and government. The Academy is a component of the collaboration being generated through Workforce LA. It was developed in response to employer complaints that changing workplace skill requirements were resulting in a shortage of qualified entry-level workers.

School Elements

The school district targets students from low income and educationally deprived families who would most benefit from a structured school setting and arranges for flexible scheduling and individualized instruction for them on a full-time basis.

Workforce LA (cont.)

Work Elements

The City of Los Angeles refers students to jobs, assigns a city employee to serve as mentor to each student, and connects education with real workplace demands. In addition to full-time school hours students involved in Workforce LA log 12-30 hours of work experience for which they receive financial incentives and training benefits. City employees are assigned as mentors.

Unique Characteristics

Academic and personal support systems are critical to the success of students in the program and are provided through mentors/supervisors. Students are encouraged and supported to continue their education and training through college.

Recognition

Workforce Los Angeles was cited as an exemplary high school droupout prevention program in a Brandeis University report of Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project. Further information on this program can be obtained through *The Practitioner's Guide to Program Options / Dropout Prevention Strategies for In-school Youth* (1992, pp. 51-53) available through the Center for Human Resources at Brandeis University's Heller Graduate School in Massachusetts.

Limited English Proficiency Students

Comprehensive Bilingual Vocational Education for Refugee Youth
Catholic Charities of Richmond, Inc.
1010 N. Thompson Street
Richmond, VA 23230
Mary Jo Bateman, Project Director

Setting

Metropolitan area which sees a large influx of bilingual students on a regular basis, accompanied by academic and vocational difficulties.

Background

Begun with U.S. Department of Education funding for the purpose of reducing high school dropout rates among limited English proficient (LEP) youth and to increase the English Language skills to a high enough level so that the number of employment opportunities are increased.

School Elements

A two-year program of instruction is provided, which includes half a day of intensive English as a second language and life skills training for independent living.

Workplace Elements

Students are given half a day of vocational training with bilingual assistance and three hours per week of training in job readiness. Bilingual members of the business community visit the

classroom and take students to job sites to help reinforce the connection between school and work.

Unique Characteristics

In its first year of operation, the program saw a LEP dropout rates decrease from 35% to 0% and from 20% to 4% in the two counties it served.

Recognition

This program received national recognition in 1991 as an exemplary vocational education program serving special needs populations. Information on the program was accessed through Clemson's Internet site.

Underachieving or Unmotivated Youth

Cornell Youth and Work Program
G62C Martha Van Rensselaer Hal
Ithaca, NY 14853-4401
(607) 255-8394
Stephen Hamilton - Director

Setting

Located in and around the city of Binghamton, New York, Cornell University's Youth and Work program focuses on apprenticeships and seeks to produce and make available for replication a model that will help students move from adolescence to adulthood as productive, community-oriented workers.

Background

Inspired by youth apprenticeship in Germany, the Cornell project has chosen to focus on three areas: manufacturing and engineering technology, administration and office technology, and health care.

School Elements

Classroom time is spent learning theories and practices in the various fields, planning and processing what will and does occur in the workplace. Students will spend two years of high school and two years of community college time involved in the Cornell project. They will leave with a myriad of technical skills and associate's degrees.

Cornell Youth and Work Progam (Cont.)

Workplace Elements

Students become apprentices to employers, using skills they have learned in the classroom and gradually acquiring on-the-job from more experienced co-workers. In effect, employers use the apprenticeship program to "grow their own" future employees.

Unique Characteristics

Employers foot most of the bill for the apprenticeship programs, as they stand to receive the greatest benefit from student specialized training. They are willing to take the gamble that students might use them for training and then move on to another company. That does not happen often, as students and employers seem to genuinely feel a commitment toward those with whom they were closely involved.

Recognition

Cornell's Youth and Work Program is listed on-line through the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration as an excellent model program for educationally disadvantaged at-risk students. Information on the program can be found by reading Ithaca Media's 1993 report, "Toward a Youth Apprenticeship System: A Progress Report from the Youth Apprenticeship Demonstration Project in Broome County, New York."

Underachieving Youth

Business Technology Academies Program
Sequoia Union High School District
480 James Avenue
Redwood City, CA 94062
Dr. Marilyn Raby, Director of Curriculum Services

Setting

Business Technology Academies Program (BTAP) is a collaborative venture between Carlmont and Woodside high schools in the Sequoia Union High School District.

Background

The program was designed to serve underachieving, low-income students from ages 15-18 who have shown irregular attendance and a poor academic record, but who are willing to try and improve their performance.

School Elements

Participants in the program are expected to make a three-year commitment, during which time they will receive instruction in language arts, math, social studies, and business technology from the same team of instructors. Block instruction is provided in these area, while the students are mainstreamed for electives and other school activities.

Workplace Elements

Computer literacy and computer-assisted instruction are provided through state-of-the-art interactive technology which business and industry helps to plan and implement. Each student is

Business Technology Academies Program (Cont.)

matched with a local industry volunteer mentor and during their final year in the program, students may qualify for paid summer employment with their mentor's company.

Unique Characteristics

Mentors visit the students' classroom and students visit the mentors' job sites. Regular, long-term, one-to-one contact with mentors in the student's chosen field appears to be an empowering factor.

Recognition

Dr. William Callison, Ph.D., a professor of educational administration at California State University at Fullerton, heralds BTPA as an exemplary at-risk student program in his 1994 *Dropout Prevention Handbook: Apprenticeships and Other Solutions,* available through Technomic Publishing Co., Lancaster, PA.

Chronically Truant Students

VIP – Vocational Interdisciplinary Program
Dade County Office of Vocational, Adult,
Career and Community Education
1450 Northeast Second Avenue
Miami, FL 33132
(305) 995-1808

Roger C. Cuevas, Assistant Superintendent

Setting

The south area of Dade County, Florida.

Background

Funded initially through the Florida Education Funding Program, this voluntary, self-contained program targets chronic truants in southern Dade County. Parental approval and parental participation are required of students.

School Elements

A variety of academic activities accompanied by individual, group, and peer counseling are the hallmarks of this program. Life management instruction, attitudinal self awareness activities, and community service projects are integrated with the basic academic curriculum. Once students have completed the VIP, they are returned to their regular schools and a continuation of academic requirements.

Workplace Elements

Vocational training, employability-skills training, and career counseling, including career shadowing, are utilized. Upon completion of the VIP, students continue vocational training as shared time

VIP Program (Cont.)

students.

Unique Characteristics

Parental participation is viewed as a vital part of the program and is sought to assist with the monitoring of student attendance, Frequent phone calls and letters to parents, as well as home visitations form a collaborative bond between the parent, school, and students. Intensive, personal attention is what program officials believe makes the VIP successful.

Recognition

VIP is recognized by the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University as an exemplary program. Information on VIP was accessed through Clemson's Internet site.

Substance Abusing Youth

The Community School
P.O. Box 555
79 Washington Street
Camden, Maine 04843
(207) 236-3000
Emanuel Pariser, Co-Director

Setting

A six-month residential program in which students referred by the schools and the courts are expected to earn high school diplomas.

Background

This program targets substance abusers and receives funding from the Maine Office of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Prevention and the Maine Department of Corrections. Interviews are conducted to screen applicants, who must choose to attend. Only 16 students may be enrolled in The Community School in a given six-month period.

School Elements

Academic-focused classroom work with a high level of individualized attention is how this intensive, four night a week, school education system is structured. Individual academic assistance is offered via volunteer tutors for students in need of additional assistance. Pre-class warm-up activities are a nightly feature. School rules prohibiting violence and sexual relations among students are strongly enforced by the whole group.

The Community School (cont.)

Workplace Elements

Students work a minimum of 28 hours a week at day jobs they find themselves after undergoing school-based employability skills training. They are required to pay $50 of their earnings for room and board. Students are given an opportunity to process the results of their daily work experiences in a group setting. Activities are designed to promote economic self-sufficiency among students.

Unique Characteristics

Substance abuse, career counseling, and periodic educational workshops are important elements of The Community School. Parental involvement is encouraged and ongoing family support services are provided. An outreach program keeps in contact with former students.

Recognition

The Community has been recognized by the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University as an exemplary program. Information regarding the program was accessed through Clemson's Internet site.

Juvenile Offenders

WAVE, Inc.
501 School Street S.W., Suite 600
Washington, DC 20024
(204) 484-0103
Alta J. Cannady, V.P. of Program Development

Setting

A model that operates in 30 states, WAVE, Inc. is school- and community-based program specializing in dropout recovery for juvenile offenders. Referrals of adjudicated youth ages 16-21 are made to individual WAVE affiliates by courts, schools, human service agencies, friends, and parents. Approximately 7,000 students are serviced annually.

Background

WAVE, Inc. receives federal funding from a variety of sources, including JTPA, Carl Perkins Vocational Applied Technology Act, and the departments of education and juvenile justice. Corporations and foundations also subsidize its efforts. The Washington, DC headquarters works to help school systems design and implement dropout prevention programs via staff training. Cost per student is approximately $150-$200.

School Elements

Remedial educational instruction and motivational development techniques are incorporated into existing traditional and alternative school programming. Instructional activities are individualized and

WAVE (cont.)

competency-based. Basic academic skills and life skills relevant to the needs of youth are emphasized. Computer-assisted instruction is available at most WAVE sites. Student achievement in workshops, competitive events, and other activities is compensated with recognition, reinforcement and rewards.

Workplace Elements

Competency based pre-employment training, job placement, and follow-up services comprise the school-to-work aspect of WAVE. The employment component is designed to promote job and social skills development, in addition to instilling personal responsibility.

Unique Characteristics

WAVE can be tailored to individual school and community needs. Ongoing staff training and support is available from the parent company.

Recognition

WAVE has been recognized by the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University as an exemplary program. Information on WAVE was accessed through Clemson's Internet site.

Juvenile Offenders

Hollywood Diner
Department of Juvenile Services
State of Maryland
2323 Eastern Blvd.
Building E
Baltimore, MD 21220
(404) 780-7808
Charles Stewart, Superintendent of Education

Setting

At risk students develop attitudes and skills of reliable employees and learn the restaurant trade by operating a restaurant called the *Hollywood Diner* in downtown Baltimore.

Background

Created by the Chesapeake Center, a private school supported by contracts from the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) of the State of Maryland. The city of Baltimore leases the 1950's restaurant to the Center for a $1 year. The diner provides educational services to teenagers, age sixteen to twenty, who are under court supervision and who are having difficulty in public school classrooms.

School elements

The program attempts to develop in students the confidence , self-respect and maturity needed for employment. The Diner supports two full-time adult employees. One is a cook with no social service training, the other is a counselor experienced with at-risk youth. The

Hollywood Diner (cont.)

program also teaches job readiness skills, such as finding a job, interviewing techniques, and expectations on the job.

Workplace elements

Student work in the diner as servers, food preparers, cooks, and dishwashers. After hours the trainees have opportunities to learn other jobs as they work in the Diner's catering business. Work-study projects are done in conjunction with local restaurants and hotels.

Unique Characteristics.

The diner offers breakfast and lunch to office workers from 7:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. There is a take-out service as well as delivery. Because of the dependence of grants and volunteer efforts, the program's continuance is vulnerable. The program, however, is an illustration of how a community can tackle its problems through imaginative entrepreneurial ventures.

Recognition:

The program has received much media attention and was cited in the book entitled School-based Enterprise: Productive Learning in American High Schools (1994). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Tech Prep Students

PACE Tech Prep
(Partnership for Academic and Career Education)
P.O. Box 587, Highway 76
Pendleton, SC 29670
(803) 646-8361, ext. 2378
Diana M. Walter, Executive Director

Setting

Anderson, Oconee and Pickens county school districts in South Carolina.

Background

The PACE Tech Prep program was begun in 1987 to target the "neglected majority" of general education high school students who are neither college-bound nor technically proficient, which puts them at-risk in the job market.

School Elements

General education coursework in math, English, and science courses are replaced with applied academics. Emphasis is placed on mid-level career understanding as part of the academic program. Academic and vocational studies are blended into cluster pathways. Mastery of basic skills is required to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level. College credit at nearby Tri-County Technical College is available to Tech Prep participants, based on demonstrated competencies.

Advanced technology certificates are available for associate degree completers. New teaching methods are being used, utilizing

PACE (cont.)

both the expertise and presence of business and industry personnel in the classroom.

Workplace Elements

Field site visits, unpaid internships, and apprenticeships are made available to qualified students who have first completed the necessary classroom work.

Unique Characteristics

Leadership of the program is provided by PACE, an organization which unites businesses with schools toward the end result of better preparing students for future employment.

Recognition

PACE is recognized by the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University as an exemplary program. Information on PACE was accessed through Clemson's Internet site.

APPENDIX B

Standards and Indicators of Quality for the Evaluation of Programs for At-Risk Students

Note: Suggested possible approaches to evaluate the standards are provided in the parentheses following each indicator)

Standard 1. All program and school staff who work with at risk students receive training to strengthen their ability to provide an appropriate instructional program.

1.1. All program and school staff who work with at-risk students attend in-service training sessions relevant to their work with the program during the academic year. (existing documentation)

1.2. The content of in-service training sessions is based on a school's identified program needs. (existing documentation)

Standard 2. The curriculum is organized in a manner that supports each student's most rapid progression toward basic-skills mastery.

2.1. Students' current basic skills mastery levels are frequently monitored by the instructional staff (existing documentation)

2.2 Teachers keep records of students' mastery of basic skills (existing documentation)

2.3 Different content areas of the curriculum are integrated (e.g. writing is taught with science, math is taught with social studies). (existing documentation)

Standard 3. Program staff employ multiple strategies to motivate students in the program.

3.1. Students are actively involved in productive activity. (observation checklist)

3.2. Students are praised for success in the classroom. (observation checklist)

3.3. Students are provided with assistance when needed. (observation checklist)

3.4. Program staff promote students' positive attitudes toward school. (existing attitude scale)

3.5. Program staff communicate their positive regard for students. (observation checklist)

3.6 Program staff have high expectations for students' success. (written questionnaire)

Standard 4. Instruction is individualized.

4.1. Students' assignments differ based on their assessed needs. (existing documentation)

4.2. Lessons are planned to accommodate different learning styles strengths and are not limited to paper and pencil activities. (existing documentation)

4.3. Assessments of student progress include using narrative progress reports. (existing documentation)

Standard 5. Instructional opportunities exist for at-risk students to interact regularly with academically successful students.

5.1. At-risk students lunch or participate in physical education, music or some other activity with academically successful students as par t of their school day. (existing documentation)

5.2. Students engage in cooperative team planning activities with successful students. (observation checklist, existing documentation)

5.3. At-risk students work on group assignments with academically successful students. (observation checklist, existing documentation)

5.4. At-Risk students receive peer tutoring from academically successful students. (observation checklist, existing documentation)

Standard 6. Parents are involved in the instructional program.

6.1. Parents confer with teachers about students' progress. (interview, existing documentation)

6.2. Parents assist with the instructional program. (interview, existing documentation)

6.3. Parents attend instructional programs designed for them. (interview , existing documentation)

Standard 7. Services to the students are comprehensive and well coordinated.

7.1. An individual students' progress is systematically followed, discussed, and coordinated with the parents and all key school

personnel with whom the student comes in contact. (existing documentation)

Standard 8. Adequate provision is made for assessing the effectiveness of the program.

8.1. The program design is based upon the needs of the group being served. (existing documentation)

8.2. A comprehensive program evaluation plan is being followed and appropriate information is recorded, collected, summarized, and reported annually. (existing documentation)

Standard 9. Provision has been made for on-going program improvement.

9.1. Program changes are implemented based upon the results of the annual program evaluation. (existing documentation)

Standard 10. Students are successful in the program.

10.1. Students and their parents perceive their participation in the program as positive. (focus group interview)

10.2. Students' successes are recognized in the classroom. (observation checklist)

10.3. The school program staff provides leadership and support for appropriate program practices. (written questionnaire)

Standard 11. School staff actively provide the resources necessary for program success.

11.1. The school administration sees that the program is physically well equipped. (existing documentation)

11.2. The school administration provides leadership and support for appropriate program practices. (written questionnaire)

11.3. Nonprogram staff in the school perceive the program as positive. (focus group interview)

GLOSSARY

at risk youth: individuals who are at risk of not succeeding in our educational institutions due to illness, maladjustment, inadequacy, unhappiness, low achievement, low self-esteem, antisocial or death-oriented behavior.

career pathway: term used for all the possible options including K-12 education, work experience, military, apprenticeship, advanced training and/or postsecondary education that an individual can use and/or experience to secure a rewarding and successful career.

cohort rate: measures what happens to a single group or cohort (e.g. those who started 8th grade in 1996) of students over time.

event rate: measures the proportion of student who drop out in a single year without completing high school.

experiential education: refers to the many practices of utilizing out-of-classroom, often off-location or off-campus, resources as a learning laboratory.

intervention stage: actions designed to interrupt or modify academic, school, or personal problems that are negatively affecting student performance.

job shadowing: an experiential learning activity which is normally designed to be a short-term, non-intrusive direct observation of individuals who are directly involved in the workplace.

mediation stage: the process of providing an educational environment that ensures success for all students.

mentor: a person of age or experience seniority who undertakes to guide the career development of a younger person or person or lesser experience.

prevention stage: actions which can be taken to anticipate, forestall, or deal with cognitive, social, or personal problems before they irreparably impair a student's ability to perform successfully in school.

recovery stage: the process that provides individuals with a variety of opportunities to complete their education, usually in nontraditional settings.

school based enterprise: an activity sponsored or conducted by a school, or agency that engages groups of students in producing goods or services for sale or use to people other than the students involved.

status rate: measures the proportion of the population (e.g. 16-24 year-olds who have not completed high school and are not enrolled.

service learning: programs which emphasize the contribution of useful services to an organization or community by students and the learning which occurs as a result of the experiences is usually credited. Service learning involves the integration of service opportunities with academic learning by incorporating lessons from work into the classroom curriculum, i.e. cleaning up a local stream while studying ecology and pollution. Service learning can provide exposure to private and public sectors career opportunities, real world experiences and allow students to be actively involved prior to reaching "employment age."

work experience: a generic term that is used as an umbrella for any type of work experience (paid or non-paid, for credit or non-credit).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agencies/Organizations Useful in Addressing the Needs of At Risk Students

The Alternative Schools Network (ASN) supports community-based and community-run programs that develop and expand educational, training, and support services for youth--particularly for youth in inner-city neighborhoods. Much of ASN's work has involved assisting in the development of programs for out-of-school youth or those at risk of dropping out. 1807 West Sunnyside, Suite 1D, Chicago, IL 60640, 312-728-4030.

Arizona CALL-A-TEEN Youth Resources, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the long-term economic self sufficiency of at-risk and out-of-school youth. CALL A TEEN provides education and training experiences designed to foster improved competencies among its participants. In September 1995, CALL A TEEN opened its Center of Excellence, a public charter school that emphasizes basic skills, integrated academic and occupational experiences, and the practical application of skills within the context of school to work. More than thirty percent of all students in the Center are former dropouts. 649 North Sixth Avenue, Phoenix, AZ, 602-252-6721.

Bay State Skills Corporation (BSSC) develops school to work programs and provides technical assistance on education and training initiatives across Massachusetts and the New England region. BSSC has launched statewide education reform efforts designed to promote collaboration among schools, colleges, employers, and community based organizations, including programs and services that address the unique needs of out of school and at risk youth. In addition, BSSC has issued reports and made policy recommendations on school to work for at risk and out of school youth. 101 Summer Street, Boston, MA 02119-1203, 617-292-5100.

Cities In Schools, Inc. (CIS) incorporated in 1977 is the nation's largest and oldest dropout prevention organization. The organization pioneered the concept of coordinating and delivering existing already-funded health and human services to at-risk students and their families through the public school system. CIS currently operates nationwide in over 800 public schools, 200 communities and 28 states, serving more than 200,000 students and their families. CIS operates a network of "corporate academies"--innovative public schools at

alternative sites which increase the choices available to students by partnering with corporate sponsors such as Viacom, Goldman Sachs, Burger King and some NFL teams. 1199 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 300 Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 519-8999.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education acquires significant educational literature dealing with adult education from basic literacy training through professional skill upgrading; career education, including career awareness, career decision-making, career development, career change, and experienced-based education; and, vocational -technical education including subprofessional fields, industrial arts, correctional education, employment and training programs, youth employment, work experience programs, education/business partnerships, entrepreneurship, adult retraining, and vocational rehabilitation for the handicapped. Ohio State University, Center on Education and Training for Employment 1900 Kenny Road Columbus, OH 43210-1090, (614) 292-4353 or (800)848-4815.

Focus Dissemination Project is a successful secondary program for training teachers to deal with disaffected youth, secondary students and all secondary educators, school board members, and community members who have an interest in developing local programs to meet the needs of the disaffected students in their settings.

Focus provides an alternative education plan for students who have been identified as disaffected, showing a lack of motivation, lack of confidence, and low self esteem. The program effects responsible institutional change and positive student attitude and performance by helping students learn responsibility to self, school, and society. Through a group counseling experience, the peer group is guided to deal with the problems causing disaffection. Focus is a school within a school for secondary students who are not achieving or functioning in a way beneficial to themselves and or those around them.

The Focus program seeks to reduce student disaffection with school and learning, to improve each student's ability to relate effectively with peers and adults, and to give each student a reason to be optimistic about the future. Focus is a highly structured program offering courses in English, science, physical education, health, and electives in the regular school program. All focus students are involved in a group counseling experience called family. Each family consists of 8 to 10 students and one teacher who meet together one hour daily throughout the year. Family attempts to help the student develop feelings of caring, self worth, and concern for others. It includes

examination of one's own behavior in relation to the reactions of others within a atmosphere of positive support from the group.

Program effectiveness is measured in grade equivalency gains on standard achievement tests, reductions in negative behaviors and improved attendance and grades. Focus Dissemination Project, Human Resource Associates, Inc. Suite 200, 201 North Concord Exchange, South Saint Paul, MN 55075 (612) 451-6840 or (800) 345-5285.

New Ways to Work is a non profit organization dedicated to identifying innovative workplace practices, such as the integration of school based and work based learning. Its New Ways Workers program collaborates with schools and community based organizations to ensure that the needs of both in school and out of school youth are met. It also incorporates businesses into the development process in order to identify employer demands more effectively and foster more receptive workplace environments. 785 Market Street, Suite 950, San Francisco, CA 94103, 415-995-9860.

REAL Enterprises (Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning) is a network of non-profit organizations working in partnership with over 100 high schools and postsecondary institutions nationwide to foster youth and adult entrepreneurship and small business development in rural America. REAL Enterprises 115 Market Street, Suite 320 Durham, NC 27701 (919) 688-7325 FAX (919) 682-7621.

The Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk established by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education to address nationally significant problems and issues in education. John Hopkins University 3503 North Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, (410) 516-8800 and Howard University, Department of Psychology Washington, DC 20059, (202) 806-8484.

The Center for Employment and Training (CET) is a private, non-profit corporation dedicated to job training and career development,. Focusing mainly on those who are hard to serve, CET operates its own intake, training, skills building, and counseling programs. Nearly twenty percent of CET participants are aged seventeen to twenty one, and fifty-four percent of CET enrollees of all ages are elementary or high school dropouts. 702 Vine Street, San Jose, CA 95110, 408-287-7924.

The National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) works with teachers, counselors, administrators, businesses, and community leaders concerned with dropout issues. NDPC provides technical assistance to programs operating dropout prevention programs; conducts research on a variety of dropout and dropout related issues, and collects, analyzes, and disseminates information on dropout prevention strategies. NDPC also operates a database listing programs and other resources applicable to at risk youth. Many of their services and resources are directed at out of school as well as in school at risk youth. 20 Martin Street, Clemson, SC 29634-5111, 803-656-2599.

The Young Adult Learning Academy (YALA) is a school dedicated to youth who have dropped out of the New York City schools or completed high school with very low academic achievement levels. In order to help young people complete their high school education and enter employment, YALA provides an integrated program of education, occupational preparation (child care, health, computers), and support services which include family support, health services, and programs in the arts and culture. YALA works closely with New York City community organizations to recruit youth and provide support services. 320 East 96th Street, New York, NY 10128, 212-348-7006, kleinbardp@aol.com

Youthbuild USA is a comprehensive youth and community development program that provides unemployed high school dropouts with the opportunity to serve their communities as they develop job skills and prepare for their future. Participants build housing for the homeless and other low income persons while attending a Youthbuild operated school to earn a high school equivalency degree and perhaps prepare to continue into postsecondary education. Programming includes intensive group counseling and peer support networks. Youthbuild USA also provides technical assistance to local organizations either operating or planning to implement a Youthbuild program. 58 Day Street, Third Floor, West Somerville, MA 02144, 617-623-9900.

Publications Useful in Addressing the Needs of At Risk Students

American Vocational Association. (1995). Successful Strategies: Building a School-to-Careers System. Alexandria, VA: Author. (800)826-9972.

Government Printing Office (GPO), Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 1525-07954. Order Desk: 202-783-3238.

Educational Reforms and Student At Risk: A Review of the Current State of the Art describes what has been learned over the past few decades about children at risk, analyzes current strategies designed to improve student performance, and proposes ways of achieving academic excellence with high reliability. $11.00 from GPO, #065-000-00616-2.

Reaching the Goals: Goal 2-High School Completion presents research on high school dropouts and high school completion. $2.75 from GPO; #605-000-00613-8.

School Engagement & Students At Risk examines the role of engagement or involvement as it relates to student achievement. $7.50 from GPO #065-000-00595-6.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education, Dept. EIB, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20208-5641.

Dropping Out of School: 1982 and 1992 is a study of the dropout prevention population and explains the dropout experiences between the sophomore and senior years of two groups of students a decade apart. Free from OERI; #NCES 93-901.

Education Consumer Guide: Comer School Development Program contains information on what the program is, how it got started , its goals and principles, and how it works. Free from OERI; #OR 93-3012.

Education Consumer Guide: Mentoring describes what it is, why mentoring programs are so popular, how they work and why they are needed, and gives some examples of mentoring programs. Free from OERI; #OR 93-3059.

Education Consumer Guide: Success for All gives an overview of the program. Free from OERI; #OR 93-3011.

Matias, Z.B. et al. (1995) Profiles and Best Practices: Exemplary Vocational Special Populations Programs University of California at Berkeley, CA: National Center for Research in Vocational Education.

Jobs for the Future (1995). School-to-Work Toolkits: Building a Local Program and Building a Statewide System. Cambridge, MA: Author.

National Center for Research in Vocational Education. Getting to Work: A Guide for Better Schools. (1996) University of California at Berkeley. Available from the Materials Distribution Service, Western Illinois University 46 Horrabin Hall Macomb, IL 61455 (800) 637-7652.

O'Sullivan, R. & Tennant C. (1993). Programs for At-Risk Students: A Guide to Evaluation. Newbury Park, CA. Corwin Press, Inc. A guide which is designed to assist school personnel with the evaluation of programs designed for students at risk of failure.

Stern D. et al (1994). School-Based Enterprise: Productive Learning In American High Schools. San Francisco, CA:. Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers.

The Journal of At-Risk Issues, P.O Box 36323 Birmingham, Al 35236. A joint publication of the National Dropout Prevention Center and Network.

Vue-Benson R. C. & Shumer, R.D. (1994). Topic Bibliography on Sources related to Mentoring and Service. National Service-Learning Cooperative Clearinghouse, University of Minnesota, 1954 Buford Avenue, Room 290 St. Paul, MN 55108-6197 (800) 808-SERVE.

U. S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Labor. (1995). School-to-Work Opportunities and the Fair Labor Standards Act: A Guide to Work-Based Learning, Federal Child Labor Laws, and Minimum Wage Provisions. Washington, DC: Author. Available from U.S. Department of Labor Wage-Hour offices.

Wong, K.K. & Wang, M.C. (1994). Rethinking Policy For At-Risk Students. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing Corporation. Chapters in the book examine the implementation of major federally funded categorical programs for special needs students in elementary

and secondary schools, including compensatory education, special education and programs for limited English proficiency.